

The Latest Movement for Church Unity.

We are in receipt of a circular letter issued by the "Joint Commission of the Protestant Episcopal Church, appointed to arrange for a world conference on faith and order." The pamphlet is a pathetic appeal "to all Christian Communions 'which confess our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior,' whether they are called Catholic or Protestant, or given some other name," to assist them in their efforts at the restoration of the unity of the Church, and "to unite with them in arranging for and conducting such a conference."

Reunion of the various Christian denominations with the Catholic Church "is a consummation devoutly to be wished," and the efforts of our separated brethren to bring about such a reunion are very commendable. Yet we are loathe to say that their prospects are anything but bright and encouraging. We say this, not because we doubt the purity of their motives, or because we wish their plans to miscarry; for no one reading the circular can fail to be impressed by, and even edified at, the disinterested sincerity with which they lay bare their hearts to their Christian brethren, and to be filled with sympathy for these good men. Indeed, the letter impresses one as the "De Profundis" of Protestants. It is a cry out of the depths of spiritual misery into which their long separation from the Father's house has plunged them.

If, nevertheless, we say that the present movement for reunion on the part of our Episcopal brethren is doomed to failure, it is simply because we find them on the wrong track in their quest for Church unity. There is only one way leading to unity in matters of "faith and order," and that is submission to the teaching authority of the Catholic

Church. The Church desires nothing so much as to see all peoples of the earth gathered into one fold and united under one shepherd. Hence she prays incessantly to the Spirit of Truth to enlighten those that are in spiritual darkness. She is ever ready to point out by kindly guidance and instruction the way that leads into her pale. Further she can not go without disowning her very right to exist. It is safe to say, therefore, that the Catholic Church will not be officially represented in the coming "World Conference." For this aloofness she will, of course, be charged, if not with bigotry, yet with unreasonable arrogance. But this is an old and threadbare charge.

Secularization in Italy.

There is a rumor afloat that the Italian government is contemplating another secularization of convents and other religious institutions. This is an old scheme of the robber-government "to get rich quick." Yet, in spite of its numerous spoliations of Church property, it has had all along to eke out a miserable existence, for everybody knows that even after half a century of "unification," Italy has never really been out of the throes of bankruptcy.

The latest depredation perpetrated by the Italians, the annexation of Tripoli, proved as costly as it was iniquitous. The war, indeed, added a few more leagues of barren territory to Italy's unprotected sea-coast, but it likewise depleted the national treasury. Are Italian statesmen and financiers worrying on that account? Not at all; for they have a law, and according to this law all the Orders and Congregations of men and women bound by religious vows, are suppressed as "juridical entities." That is to say, the law graciously permits religious communities of men and women to build and furnish houses for